

LIVESTOCK

Contest Overview

The State Agriculture/FFA Livestock Judging Contest is designed to exercise and reward students for developing knowledge, reasoning, and communication skills related to livestock evaluation and selection.

Contest Objectives

After completing activities involved in the State Agriculture/FFA Livestock Judging Contest, students should be able to:

1. develop skills to evaluate and select all species of livestock (cattle, hogs, and sheep).
2. develop skills to evaluate and select all sexes of livestock.
3. estimate factors which affect the grade and yield of market livestock.
4. provide a set of oral reasons for placing a class of livestock.
5. estimate the quality grade of feeder steers and market swine.

Contest Format and Scoring

The Livestock Judging Contest will consist of the following:

6 judging classes @ 50 points	= 300 points
3 oral reasons classes @ 50 points	= 150 points
2 market/feeder animal evaluation classes @ 50 points	= 100 points
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550 points	

- A. The judging classes may include either market or breeding classes from the following 12 options:
- bulls, heifers, market cattle, cull/keep heifers
 - boars, gilts, market hogs, cull/keep gilts
 - rams, ewes, market lambs, cull/keep ewes
- B. The reasons classes will involve one set from the breeding divisions and one set from the market division. Each contestant will be allowed two minutes to present their oral reasons for each class.
- C. The market animal evaluation classes will include the following activities:
1. estimate five feeder cattle for quality grade.
 2. estimate five slaughter hogs for backfat thickness, loin eye area, USDA grade, and percent muscle.
- D. In scoring the keep/cull classes, we would rank all eight animals from the best to the least desirable. Then each animal would be assigned a point value with the greatest points going to the best animal and the least points going to the least desirable animal. The top four animals are the four animals which the contestants will keep and their points should equal a total of 50. Below is an example of how the scoring system should work.

Scoring the Keep/Cull Classes

1. Rank the animals from the best to the least desirable. For this example, we placed the animals:

8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

2. Assign a point value to each one of the individual animals giving the most points to the best animals and the least points to the least desirable animal. In this case, our point assignment is as follows:

8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
18 13 11 8 7 4 3 0

Contest Rules

1. The superintendent and judges will select the classes of livestock to be judged and make the official placings.
2. Each animal will be clearly numbered for identification (i.e., 1, 2, 3, or 4).
3. Contestants will not be allowed to communicate with one another. Infractions of this rule will be cause for elimination.
4. Only the superintendents, official judges, and approved proctors will be permitted within the building when the livestock is being judged.
5. Teachers will be permitted to exit through the livestock holding area after checking in their team.
6. In keep/cull classes, contestants will select the four best animals from the eight in the class using both visual and performance records.
7. Contestants and officials will not be allowed to handle the livestock with the exception of market lambs.

In the cattle and sheep selection classes, the age spread should not exceed two months and would, preferably, be less. In the swine classes, the ages of the gilts should not exceed a 30-day spread.

All available performance data will be given on each animal in each of the selection classes. In the following list are some examples of the types of information you might expect on each species.

Cattle

1. birthdate or age in days
2. adjusted 205 day weaning weight or weaning weight ratio
3. adjusted 365 day yearling weight or yearling weight ratio
4. present day weight
5. adjust frame score at 205 days and at 365 days of age
6. EPD's

Swine

1. birthdate or age in days
2. days to 230 pounds
3. average backfat and loin eye area adjusted to 230 pounds
4. present day weight

Sheep

1. birthdate or age in days
2. adjust 90 day weights or their ratios (use like weaning weights in cattle)
3. adjusted yearling weights or ratios
4. present day weight
5. type of birth--single, twin, or triplet (multiple birth lambs are usually somewhat smaller at weaning)

The idea behind the selection class is very practical. This is the type of situation most breeders go through when they are selecting replacement females to put back into their own herds whether they are purebred or commercial producers. You must remember that it is entirely possible that the best female, in terms of visual appraisal, could have the poorest record or vice-a-versa. You may at times have to keep the female with the poorest records if she is by far the best today visually. The female that has the best records may also get culled if she is structurally incorrect or is of a very undesirable type.

References

Information on USDA swine market grades and feeder cattle grades can be obtained by writing:

Agricultural Marketing Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Livestock Seed Division -
Standard and Review Branch
Room 2641, South Building
Washington, DC 20250

MU Guidesheet: 2952--Livestock Judging Teaching
2906--Purebred Livestock Registry Association
2910--Heritability and Its Importance in Animal Breeding
2950--Oral Reasons in Livestock Judging

"Learning to Judge Angus Cattle" (free), American Angus Association, 3201 Frederick Boulevard, St. Joseph, MO 64501

Also, for further information regarding the use of performance criteria in placing and cull/keep classes, you should contact the following:

Mr. Toby Wright
Supervisor of Domestic Marketing
Market Development Division
Missouri Department of Agriculture
P.O. Box 630
Jefferson City, MO 65102
(314) 751-4339

Mr. Mike Davis
Marketing Specialist
Market Development Division
Missouri Department of Agriculture
P.O. Box 630
Jefferson City, MO 65102
(314) 751-5528

Beef Improvement Federation
C/O Charles McPeak
Animal Science Department

National Swine Improvement Federation
101 Peters Hall
University of Minnesota

Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, OK 74078

1404 Gortner Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55108

Sheep Industry Development Program, Inc.
200 Clayton Street
Denver, CO 80206

FORM 2			
STANDARD FFA PLACING CARD			
		Placings	Check Placing
Contestant Number		1-2-3-4	A
		1-2-4-3	B
		1-3-2-4	C
Class Number		1-3-4-2	D
		1-4-2-3	E
		1-4-3-2	F
Class Name		2-1-3-4	G
		2-1-4-3	H
		2-3-1-4	I
School Name		2-3-4-1	J
		2-4-1-3	K
		2-4-3-1	L
Student Name		3-1-2-4	M
		3-1-4-2	N
		3-2-1-4	O
		3-2-4-1	P
		3-4-1-2	Q
		3-4-2-1	R
Placings Score	Reasons Score	4-1-2-3	S
		4-1-3-2	T
		4-2-1-3	U
		4-2-3-1	V
		4-3-1-2	W
		4-3-2-1	X

SWINE GRADING CARD

Class Name: _____ Class Number _____

Name: _____ Contestant Number: _____

School: _____ School Number _____

Animal Number	Degree of Muscling			Average Back Fat (inches at last rib)				U.S. Grade				Score			
	Superior	Average	Inferior	0.99" or Less	1.00" to 1.24"	1.25" to 1.49"	1.50" and Over	1	2	3	4	³ Muscling	³ Back Fat	⁴ U.S. Grade	TOTAL
1															
2															
3															
4															
5															

Contestants will place in the proper variation of "Degree of Muscling" the "Average Back Fat" and "U.S. Grade" for each animal. All grades will not necessarily be represented.

Three points will be allowed for each: the correct identification of degree of muscling and the average back fat. One point will be allowed for each if the contestant missed the correct identification by one digit. Four points will be allowed for correctly identifying the U.S. Grade. Two points will be allowed if graded in the nearest grade either above or below the correct grade. 50 points possible.

Beef Cattle Grading Card **FEEDER CATTLE**

Class Name: _____ Class Number: _____

Name: _____ Contestant Number: _____

School: _____ School Number: _____

Animal Number	Frame Size				Muscle Thickness				SCORE	TOTAL
	Large	Medium	Small	Inferior	1	2	3	4		
1										
2										
3										
4										
5										
TOTAL SCORE										

For Feeder Cattle Grading, the contestant is to place a check mark in the proper grade standard for Frame Size and a check mark in the grade standard for Muscle Thickness. No cattle over 36 months of age will be used. Perfect score is 50.

SCORING: 6 points will be allowed for the correct frame size
2 points will be allowed if the animal is graded - one grade above or one grade below the correct frame size.

4 points will be allowed if the correct muscle thickness is identified.
2 points will be allowed if the animal is graded - one grade above or one grade below the correct muscle thickness

Livestock Selection Class

Name: _____

Contestant Number: _____

School: _____

School Number: _____

List below the numbers of
the four animals you would
KEEP!

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Score: _____

Oral Reasons *

Name: _____ Contestant Number: _____

School _____ School Number: _____

SCORING FACTORS:**

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. | Appearance and Delivery | 12 points _____ |
| 2. | Proper Use of Terms | 10 points _____ |
| 3. | Accuracy of Statements | 10 points _____ |
| 4. | Importance of Points Covered | 18 points _____ |

Perfect Score = 50 points

Judges Comments: _____

Total Score: _____

*This card will be used for scoring all oral reason classes.

**Note: Contestants are not penalized for the format used in presenting reasons, but an introductory statement on how the class was placed and a summary at the end is in order.